

REMARKS

This application, as amended herein, contains claims 1 - 20.

Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 9, 11-14, 16, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Rossides. Claims 5, 7, 15, 17 and 20 were rejected as being obvious over Rossides. In view of the amendments made herein, and the remarks below, these rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants' invention, as set forth in claim 1, is directed, generally, to a system for providing expert solutions to an end user seeking a solution to an end user request. The system comprises receiving means for receiving an end user request generated by an end user, the receiving means having associated therewith a database for storing therein information relating to a plurality of experts; means for searching the database to select at least one expert and to generate a search result which corresponds to the end user request; means for transmitting at least a portion of the end user request to the expert; means for receiving an expert answer corresponding to the end user request transmitted; means for transmitting at least a portion of the expert answer to the end user; and means for storing the request and the solution in the database. The system also comprises means for compensating the end user who first submitted the end user request when another, subsequent end user makes a request and receives the solution provided by the expert.

Thus, Applicant's invention, in sharp contrast to Rossides, compensates the original end user who requested an answer from an expert, when the answer or solution provided by the expert is provided to another subsequent end user (see Applicant's specification, for example, at page 8, line 31 to page 9, line 9 for support for this amendment). Applicant's invention differs from the teachings of Rossides, where it is primarily the supplier of the answer who is compensated, and not the initial requester. Further, in Applicant's invention, the original end user who requested the information is compensated based on the answer of the expert, and not of just another user, or worse yet, an answer supplied by the original requestor.

In addition to being different from and novel with respect to the teachings of Rossides, Applicant's invention, as set forth in claim 1, has several unexpected advantages. First, in accordance with Applicants' invention, there is no incentive to make very simple and frivolous requests. Compensation is provided to the original requester for entering requests which experts answer, and not those that can be answered by the general public with a trivial amount of effort, such as looking up a commonly available piece of information, such as the telephone number for the Smithsonian or a technical help telephone number for a major corporation, as taught by Rossides. Second, Applicant's system provides an incentive for the public to use the system, because if the question is one in which other members of the public have an interest, when other, subsequent end users request an

answer, the original submitter of the request will be compensated. Thus, the original end user who made the request will have the opportunity to earn back any money paid, or to receive compensation for having submitted a complex question which must be answered by an expert, but is of general interest. The end user originally asking the question is thus rewarded for performing the public service of having in effect commissioned an expert to answer the question. Rossides does not teach or suggest this approach. For these reasons, it is submitted that claim 1 is directed to patentable subject matter.

Independent method claim 11 has been amended in a manner analogous to system claim 1. For all of the reasons set forth with respect to claim 1, it is submitted that claim 11 is also directed to patentable subject matter.


Claims 2 - 6 and 13 - 16 deal with the expert submitting a request previously received by that expert and a solution previously provided by that expert. Again, these are not mere end users, as is the case in the cited portions of Rossides, but requests for which an expert has been commissioned, and solutions provided by that expert. Such requests may have nothing to do with an original end user, but may be for work that the expert did independently of the system and method of the invention. However, again with respect to these claims, there is a reward for providing a solution to a request. Thus, the public benefits from the work of an expert, and not just any end user who happens to ask a question that can be answered with a trivial amount of effort. Rossides does not teach

or suggest this approach. For these reasons, and for the reasons set forth with respect to claims 1 and 1, from which these claims depend, it is submitted that claims 2 - 6 and 13 - 16 are directed to patentable subject matter.

The remaining claims depend from one of the independent claims discussed above. These claims have further recitations, which in combination with those of the claim from which they depend are not taught or suggested by the art of record. For the reasons set forth above these claims are also directed to patentable subject matter.

A check for \$60 for a one-month extension of time to file this paper is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,



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